

have been manufactured in Ipswich. This and the fact that its imports are French rather than the Rhenish wares found in Ipswich offers a most interesting comparison with Burrow Hill. Wade suggests that the Bonhunt imports must have come from a source such as London. However, the French wares at Burrow Hill are more likely to have been imported directly in ships such as the Graveney merchantman which had a French cooking jar on board when abandoned on the North Kent coast (Fenwick 1978). Coastal trade is also hinted at by the Burrow Hill discovery of a Cuthred penny minted in Canterbury (No. 13, see below).¹⁶

Compared with Middle Saxon sites in the rest of the country, Burrow Hill has produced an exceptional number of separate finds of coins. Whether this genuinely reflects a former economic importance or merely careful excavation must for the present remain an open question. Topographically it is remarkably similar to Richborough, Kent, a Roman fort of the Saxon shore, which has also produced a large number of early Anglo-Saxon coins. Cunliffe (1968, 251) interprets post-Roman Richborough as an early anchorage and defensive site 'used frequently by travellers to and from the continent, until such time as silting and the consequent growth of Sandwich, left the hill isolated among its surrounding marches.'

On the other hand the considerable strategic importance of Burrow Hill, which was noted by Ward Perkins (1937, 196), rather than any potential as a port, may have been the reason behind its Middle Saxon occupation, although later *burhs* were planned for both defence and commerce (Campbell, John and Wormald 1982, 153). When power passed from East Anglia, Redwald's successors may have had need to look for a defensible site close to their palace at Rendlesham. Burrow Hill and Kingston below Woodbridge, each 7.5 km distant and each situated in the fork of two rivers, seem to be the nearest natural strongholds, from which to resist coastal seaborne attack or for retreat under threat from a powerful neighbouring king. Interference came from Mercia first, for as Stenton deduced (1950, 34), Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, was supreme in the South for some years before his death in 675, while Bede expressly states that by 731 all the English provinces south of the Humber were subject to Ethelbald of Mercia (*HE* II, XXIII). That Mercian domination included fortresses is clear from Ethelbald's charter making provision for their repair (Birch 1885, no. 178). It was resisted in East Anglia for we hear of two insurrections which took place in the latter part of the 8th century. They were sometimes successful, because East Anglia was again independent from 825 to 869. Perhaps the coins which Wigræd minted for his unidentified king and which Wilred and other moneyers minted for King

Beonna denote other periods of spirited independence with *Insula de Burgh* one centre of East Anglian resistance. Consonant with this theory, the separate finds of Anglo-Saxon coins form a chronologically very tight group with the exception of the Cuthred penny and notably do not include any coins of Offa.¹⁷

Alternatively the site may be connected with the religious enthusiasm of the East Anglian royal family. If its name is early, it need not have been modified by monastic use (*cf* Fursey's foundation in Cnobheresburg – *HE* III, XIX). The topography, particularly the causeway, is reminiscent of other known or postulated monastic sites, such as Lindisfarne, Ardwall, Iken and Brandon. The predominantly male cemetery suggests either military or monastic use, but it is noteworthy how high a proportion of small finds have parallels at Whitby, a monastery founded in 657 and destroyed in 867. It is possible, too, that the silver vandyke derived from a *stylus* of Whitby type (Peers and Radford 1943, 64, fig. 15, 7); in this case the literacy implied by a writing implement would be a strong indicator of monasticism. Rigold observed in 1974 that the sites which have been the most prolific in coins have been those of ancient religious settlements close by the sea. Burrow Hill is within what he termed the area of concentrated settlement under the Wuffinga lordship (1961, 58-9). Isolated on its estuary, yet protected by the royal *vills*, it lies close to the presumed sites of the East Anglian cathedral at Felixstowe (Dommoc) and Botolph's monastery at Iken. It lies even closer to Rendlesham, the home of the dynasty which embraced Christianity so fervently that many members of it founded and entered monasteries in the 7th century. If Burrow Hill was a monastery, then, like Lindisfarne, Whitby and Icanho, it would have been an obvious target for the Danes and, once destroyed, must have vanished from the record, since no reference to an earlier monastery in Butley is made in the Augustinian Priory's foundation charter (Mortimer, 1979, no. 120).

THE CAULDRON CHAIN

The 17 fragments of the cauldron-chain are wasted by corrosion so that the gauge of the iron and its finish are difficult to determine. They have been conserved within the last decade and some evidence for the way in which they were connected has been lost. However, photographs taken prior to conservation elucidate and confirm the sequence of elements drawn in the Accession Register (Ipswich Museum L. 963-77) at a scale of 1:17.¹⁸

The photographs (Fig. 5) show links massed at the base of the hook-element (Fig. 6, 3). Today element 3 has element 4 and a ring still hanging from it, but the number of links which formed the chain below them is unknown and only fragments survive. Eight have been